



Odyssey

Collaborative Trust



Community Report 2026



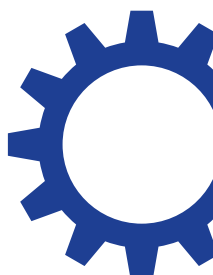
Helping our children, colleagues and community to thrive

Odyssey Collaborative Trust was formed in 2019 to provide opportunities for collaboration, support and challenge among schools in Derby, while allowing each school to retain its identity and accountability to its local community.

Being transparent in the way we work and being answerable to the communities we serve is important to us. This report is designed to give information about what we do to a wide audience. Each year we publish an annual report which goes into a lot of detail about how our schools operate, but this long and detailed document is written from a compliance perspective for the Department for Education. As well as being accountable to the government, we believe it is important to be accountable to our staff, families and local communities our schools serve.

We aim for our children, colleagues and community to thrive and we want to keep people connected to the Trust, informed, on how well we are living up to this aim. This report takes key information from our annual report and puts it in a more readable format. You can read the more detailed report on our website.

We hope you find the report useful. Please feel free to contact us via our website if you would like to know more about the work of the Trust.





Pupils' education

Our absolute priority is to ensure the children in Odyssey schools thrive. The Summer of 2025 saw an increase in pupils in year 6 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths. Outcomes are the same as the national average – 62% – despite the trust having above average numbers of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Trust Central Team has been expanded with two new roles, Director of Education and Director of SEND, these have been introduced to provide more support for schools.

Beyond the academic, our schools also focus on providing a wide range of activities in the arts, culture and sport. We're proud of the children's achievements and the way our colleagues have helped the children in our schools to thrive.



In the last year we have developed additional provision, initially at Portway (above), before moving to Beaufort, for pupils who are struggling with mainstream education. This time-limited provision allows pupils to benefit from more adult support and an arts based curriculum which builds confidence before the pupil is reintegrated back into mainstream schooling.



A key part of our identity as a trust is that all our schools are based in Derby. This means we are focused on working with local partners to make Derby the best place it can be. A major focus in the last year has been responding to the increased numbers of pupils with special educational needs (SEND). In recent years there has been an increase in pupils with high level needs in Derby. We have worked closely with the Local Authority to open a new Enhanced Resource Facility at Borrow Wood and expand the existing provision at Springfield. By the Summer term we will have around seventy pupils learning at the two schools, giving families the education their children need in a local setting.



Top left: A Beaufort Primary School pupil on the school's new residential trip.

Bottom left: Pupils and staff in the Springfield Enhanced Resource Facilities.

Below: Borrow Wood's football team who won two trophies and reached another final.



Trust Finances

In the last financial year, the Trust's total incoming resources were £17.5m. This paid for staff across our schools, resources for children, upkeep and improvements of buildings. Total expenditure was less than income meaning a surplus of around £0.4m. This was reinvested into the following projects, which have either taken place, or will in the coming months:

- Resources for Early years
- IT resources in two schools
- Resources for SEND pupils
- Improving pupil toilets in three schools
- Improving staff toilets
- Improving site security in two schools
- Expanding a nursery
- Replacing unsafe paving
- Creating a sensory room for pupils with SEND



At Odyssey Collaborative Trust there are rigorous processes to ensure money is spent well. Two sets of auditors review our processes each year. The trust's central leadership costs are kept to a minimum. The CEO's salary is set a little above headteachers salary, to ensure it is at a sensible level. Central costs also pay for range of services provided by the Central Team or by third parties.

Left: Cherry Tree Hill's nursery was expanded using £90,000 from trust reserves to enable the school to meet local demand.





Our colleagues

Working in schools is rewarding, but challenging. To support our colleagues we have developed a People Strategy. We visited all schools and worked with colleagues and asked them what it was like working for their school and for Odyssey. The conversations focused on what works well and what could be better. Then a working group was formed to discuss in more detail the challenges everyone is facing and the ideas we want to explore to make Odyssey a great place to work.

Professional development is important to us and we have created opportunities for colleagues in different roles, through our Career Pathways project. One example is for people who would like to become teachers. Like Derby Local Authority, we work closely with another important civic institution, the University of Derby to develop the next generation of teachers. In partnership with them, we now offer a school based teacher training qualification for people who already have a degree. As well as offering this to students, we also offer it to our staff. Through the government's apprenticeship levy, colleagues do not have to pay tuition fees, plus they continue to earn a salary. This brings into reach a career-changing qualification which before was prohibitively expensive for many. From September 2026 we will be offering the same to those who do not have degrees.

Each year we celebrate the colleagues at each school who have been noted by their colleagues for helping children, colleagues or the community to thrive. This year's winners are:

Asterdale: Sharon Edwards (Teacher) Beaufort: Laura Barrass (Deputy Head) Borrow Wood: Emma Cooper (Administration) Cherry Tree Hill: Hannah Crossley (Teacher) Oakwood Juniors: Paula Whitehead (Office Clerk) Portway Juniors: Charlotte Ward (Teacher) Springfield: Zoe Spencer (Teaching Assistant)

About us

We have seven schools in our trust...

						
Asterdale Primary	Beaufort Primary	Borrow Wood Primary	Cherry Tree Hill Primary	Oakwood Juniors	Portway Juniors	Springfield Primary
Joined March 2019	Joined April 2019	Joined March 2019	Joined April 2019	Joined April 2021	Joined April 2019	Joined March 2019
205 pupils	206 pupils	276 pupils	606 pupils	340 pupils	297 pupils	324 pupils
Headteacher: John O'Leary	Headteacher: Kate Beecroft	Headteacher: Natalie Barlett	Headteacher: Paul Appleton	Headteacher: CT Atwal	Headteacher: Emma Wilkinson	Headteacher: David Blackwell

To provide added assurance, an academy trust has several layers of governance. At the top of the structure are the Members who check that the Board of Trustees are carrying out their duties. The Board of Trustees are ultimately responsible for the activities of the schools in the trust.

Trustees write a Scheme of Delegation which sets out what they do and what activities are delegated to others. Some are delegated to the Trust Central Team who are as follows:

The Trust Central Team
Ian Dewes, Chief Executive Officer
Nicola Duckworth, Chief Finance Officer
Anita Breeze, Chief Operations Officer
Aimée Tinkler, Director of Education
Abbie Watts, Director of SEND

Last Summer, a much valued member of our Central Team, Jo Bunting, sadly passed away. Jo was part of Odyssey Collaborative Trust when it was first formed and played a huge part in our success. She is sadly missed.

Complementing the Trust Central Team are a group of experienced colleagues who mostly work in one school but also support others in particular areas. These Trust Champions support with areas like teaching and learning, assessment, early years and attendance.

Some activities are delegated to each school's Headteacher or Local Governing Board. These people are focused on one of the trust's schools, while the Trust Central Team work across the seven schools. Each Local Governing Board has a chairperson and meet regularly. Our Members, Trustees and Local Governors are all volunteers and we appreciate the time they give up.



